

Spotlight: Miguel Perez Gibson

When Miguel Perez Gibson retired from state government, his family and friends threw him a party to launch the next phase of his life. In the year since his retirement, that's exactly what he has done.

Perez Gibson spent over 25 years working at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in various positions, including Deputy Director. Then an opportunity to work with labor and natural resources policy led him to the House of Representatives, where he retired in October 2004.

The decision to retire was tough. He enjoyed the type of work he was doing and the advice of a financial planner, "Don't retire, work as long as you can," made him consider his options carefully.

He had always wanted to get into the field of social work, and while working at DNR, earned a master's degree in counseling and psychology. Perez Gibson said, "It was pretty incongruous at the time. People asked, 'what are you doing?' since I was a natural resources manager. It didn't make sense to anyone at that point in my life."

But Miguel followed his heart and now runs a successful counseling practice and environmental consulting business. His company's name is NACA'N, which means "center" in the Taino language.

"I stopped thinking of it as retirement and more as reinventing my life," says Perez Gibson. "I started looking at my pension check as an investment that



"I stopped thinking of it as retirement and more as reinventing my life."

would help me transition into work I wanted to do now and into my later years."

In this new phase of his life, he has more time for his family, which includes his wife Marianne, three daughters and one son. But Perez Gibson doesn't plan to slow down anytime soon. He and a group of local musicians recently formed the South Sound Community Orchestra and held their first concert in December. He also plays guitar in his Latin band, volunteers on his daughter's school soccer board and finds time to learn more about wine.

"Does my yard still need work, is the garage as tidy as I would like it ...no, but I love doing what I do, being my own boss, the creativity and flexibility."

Perez Gibson passes on this advice for getting the most out of retirement: "Live life to the fullest, whether you're 55 or 95." ■

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Coming soon— your annual statement

If you are a member of one of the retirement systems shown below, your 2005 annual statement will be delivered to your employer during the month of March:

- Public Employees' (PERS)
- Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' (LEOFF)
- Washington State Patrol (WSPRS)
- Judicial (JRS)

You can also review your annual statement online by signing up for our newest member service—Defined Benefit Account Access. Visit our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov for more information.

Your statement, which provides updates on your service credit and contributions, is based on the latest information supplied by your employer. It may not match the total retirement contribution shown on your year-end pay slip, however, because contributions are generally posted to accounts the month following payroll deduction.

If you are a member of Plan 3, you already receive quarterly statements from our Plan 3 record keeper, ICMA Retirement Corporation. Your annual statement from DRS will provide service credit information.

Be sure to look your statement over carefully. If you have questions or find discrepancies, please contact your payroll office. ■

DRS prepares to launch new retirement system

On July 1, 2006 DRS will launch the new Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS).

Members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) Plan 2 or 3, working in PSERS eligible positions on July 1, 2006 will have an election period—July 1, 2006 through September 30, 2006—to either join PSERS or remain in PERS. Employees hired into eligible PSERS positions on or after July 1, 2006 will automatically be enrolled in PSERS.

A bill passed by the 2006 Legislature will change the way eligibility is determined for membership in PSERS. To be eligible, an employee must meet one of the following criteria:

- a) Completion of a certified criminal justice training course with authority to arrest, conduct criminal investigations, enforce the criminal laws of Washington, and carry a firearm as part of the job;
- b) Primary responsibility to ensure the custody and security of incarcerated or probationary individuals;
- c) Function as a limited authority Washington peace officer, as defined in RCW 10.93.020; or
- d) Primary responsibility to supervise eligible members

This replaces the previous criteria that focused on position classifications.

For the most current information and to get answers to PSERS frequently asked questions, visit the DRS Web site. ■

For a summary of retirement-related bills considered during the 2006 Legislative session, visit our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov.

New DRS project examines retirement decision-making



“If I’d only known then what I know now.”

These are words that most of us have probably said at some point in our lives. They can be particularly true for people as they enter retirement. A successful retirement typically requires a life-long approach to decisions involving financial planning, employment, health care and other issues.

A new DRS project is looking at the retirement decision-making process. The project is studying how issues like financial planning and healthy lifestyle choices, and life events such as marriage, children, financial and employment changes, can affect retirement-related decisions. The project is also examining issues that can affect individuals after retirement such as life expectancy, health costs, and post retirement employment.

In the months ahead, the DRS project team will be working directly with members, retirees and private industry experts to gather suggestions about what information would help better prepare you for retirement and life after retirement. We will then begin developing tools and resources to help you make these important decisions.

We want to hear your ideas about what additional information you need. In the near future, we will have a survey on our Web site to capture your thoughts. In the meantime, if you have suggestions to share, or if you would like to be involved in a focus group session to discuss ideas, please contact the project team at myideas@drs.wa.gov. ■



Back issues available online

You can find an archive of previous *Retirement Outlook* issues on the DRS Web site at www.drs.wa.gov.

Q&A with DRS

How to keep us in the loop

Q: Can I give you my new address over the telephone?

A: We require your employer to submit address changes for active members so that both DRS and your employer have current information. This also ensures that you receive correspondence quickly and securely. Simply tell your employer when your address changes, and they’ll let us know.

Q: My beneficiary recently married. Can I give you her new married name over the phone?

A: Your beneficiary designation is one of the most important pieces of information associated with your retirement account. But it needs to have your signature on it. The good news is, it’s easy to update. Just visit our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov and “Quick Click” on *Forms*. They’re also available from your employer.

Beneficiary name changes aren’t the only reasons to update this form. If you marry or divorce, you should complete and submit a new form, even if your beneficiary remains the same. ■

Plan ahead for your retirement



DRS offers *free* seminars and workshops to help you plan ahead. Your spouse or partner is welcome to attend.

- **Seminars** run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and include presentations by experts in financial planning, estate planning, health insurance and Social Security. A seminar also includes a workshop on your retirement plan and a presentation on the state's Deferred Compensation Program.
- **Workshops** run 60 to 90 minutes and cover service credits, retirement eligibility, benefit calculations, payment options and other plan-specific information.

How to register: First decide if you'll attend a seminar or a workshop, then follow the instructions below to register.

- **Online:** Via the Internet at www.drs.wa.gov and click the *Seminar Registration* "Quick Clicks."
- **Telephone:** Call 1-888-711-6676 or (360) 664-7300 in the Olympia area. The TDD line is toll-free at 1-866-377-8895 or (360) 586-5450 in the Olympia area.
- **E-mail, U.S. mail or campus mail:** Send your registration to register@drs.wa.gov or to PO Box 48380, Olympia, WA 98504-8380 or by campus mail to Mailstop 48380. If your spouse or partner will attend with you, include that person's name.

Seminar and Workshop Dates and Locations May - August 2006

Saturday, May 6 - Yakima	Friday, July 14 - Tumwater*
Saturday, May 13 - Walla Walla	Saturday, July 22 - Tacoma
Saturday, June 3 - Port Townsend	Saturday, August 5 - Wenatchee*
Friday, June 16 - Seattle*	Saturday, August 19 - Edmonds

Note: All locations include workshops for PERS, SERS and TRS members. LEOFF and WSPRS workshops are offered only at the locations shown with an asterisk (*).

Workshop Schedule

	PLAN 1	PLAN 2	PLAN 3
PERS	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
PSERS*	---	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	---
SERS	---	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
TRS	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
LEOFF	11:15 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.	12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	---
WSPRS	1:35 p.m. – 2:35 p.m.	---	---

*The Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) Plan 2 Workshop is part of the Plan 2 group workshop. Information regarding PSERS Plan 2 will be included in the workshop beginning July 1, 2006.

DRS is planning seminars in the following cities during the fall schedule (September - December 2006): Bellingham, Everett, Richland, Spokane, Tacoma, Tumwater and Vancouver.

Washington State Investment Board Update



This time of year the WSIB is working hard to maximize investment returns by exercising one of its most important management tools—the proxy vote. It is through its proxy vote that the WSIB protects and advances the long-term interest of investors by either rewarding good corporate behavior with a “yes” vote or punishing irresponsible or negligent management with a “withhold” vote.

Last year the WSIB voted a total of 4,182 proxies, the bulk of which were cast in the first six months of the year. Proxy votes were cast on a total of 26,720 individual proxy proposals dealing primarily with election of directors, ratification of auditor, compensation plans, and shareholder proposals.

Recently the Board voted unanimously to amend its Proxy Voting Guidelines to include a section supporting the election of a corporation’s board of directors by majority vote. Under this standard,

which is still relatively new, a board director would have to receive the support of a majority of the shares voted in an election in order to assume the role of a director. The Board believes that majority voting provides shareholders with a real voice in the board elections and demands greater corporate accountability for directors.

For more information about the WSIB and its investment portfolio, please visit their Web site at www.sib.wa.gov. ■

Getting ready to retire?

Wondering when to expect your first benefit? After you separate from service, your first payment will be sent on the last business day of the month in which you retire. For example, if you separate from service on May 15, your retirement date is June 1. If you opt for direct deposit, we’ll electronically deposit your benefit on June 30. Otherwise we’ll mail it on June 27 so that, depending on the postal service, you receive it at the end of the month.

Signing up for electronic deposit is easy—just fill out the *Authorization for Direct Deposit form*. You should also complete an *IRS form W-4P* so the correct tax is withheld. Both forms are available on our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov. You can also call us at 1-800-547-6657 (360-664-7000 in the Olympia area) to have the forms mailed to you. And you’ll find them in your retirement packet. ■

Optional service credit for substitute teaching, disability, military service

You may be eligible to receive service credit for time employed as a classified substitute school employee or a substitute teacher; leave taken for a temporary disability; or employment interrupted by military service. The guidelines covering what, and how much, service is credited are specific to your retirement plan.

Members of PERS Plan 1 and WSPRS Plan 1 may also be eligible for “non-interruptive” military service credit. This refers to military service that occurred prior to Plan 1 membership.

For more information, call us toll-free at 1-800-547-6657 or visit our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov. ■



This newsletter is delivered in bulk to employers.
Changes to affixed mailing labels should be directed to your employer.

Distribution options for your defined contribution account funds

Are you a Plan 3 member? When you reach retirement age or leave employment, you have the opportunity to decide how to receive payments from your Washington State Investment Board (WSIB) Investment Program or Self-Directed Investment Program accounts.

Payment options include:

- lump sum
- direct rollover into a qualified individual retirement account (IRA) or eligible employer plan
- periodic payments
- personalized payment plan

You may also use funds from your Plan 3 Defined Contribution account to purchase a life annuity. An annuity is a contract that provides a guaranteed income for the rest of your life in exchange for a lump sum dollar amount, paid up-front.

For more information, or to request an annuity guide, contact ICMA-RC at 1-888-711-8773. ■

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Retirement Outlook is available to members in alternate formats. For more information contact the editor at (360) 664-7097.